Pollution deaths

†1173. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether report of World Health Organisation has stated that around five lakh persons are killed every year in the country due to the pollution caused by burning of wood, coal and dung in rural areas and most of them are women and children;

(b) whether the country accounts for 80 per cent of the six lakh premature deaths that occur in this part of Asia annually due to exposure to such pollutants;

(c) if so, the estimate of Government thereto; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) to (d) World Health Organisation's report 'Indoor Air Pollution — National burden of diseases estimates' mentions that in India, around 4.07 lakh premature deaths can be attributed annually to use of biomass fuel and coal. According to a report of Indira Gandhi Institute for Development Research, it is estimated that 4.1 lakh to 5.7 lakh women and young children die prematurely every year due to indoor air pollution caused by burning of bio-fuels in poorly ventilated homes. However, no conclusive data is available to establish the correlation between the mortality and indoor air pollution.

The Government through the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has taken various steps to control and prevent indoor air pollution, through National Programme on Biogas Development to provide alternatives to burning firewood, agricultural residues, cattle dung and coal as fuel. National Programme on Improved Chulhas has been taken up to promote thermally efficient and low smoke stoves/smokeless chulhas. IEC activities through electronic and print media are undertaken to give publicity to the programmes. Women Education programmes are also organized in villages to generate awareness about the hazards of burning firewood, agricultural wastes, cattle dung in traditional chulhas and benefits of the biogas technology etc.

Dryland farming system

1174. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the genesis and objective of enhancing sustainability of dryland farming systems;

(b) what has been achieved, so far;

(c) whether Government has extended scheme to the desert land of Rajasthan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) The National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) of the Government emphasized for introduction of a special programme for arid and semi-arid regions of the country. In pursuance, the Ministry of Agriculture formulated a Central Sector Scheme on 'Enhancing Sustainability of Dryland Farming Systems' to address the problems of farmers of rainfed dryland areas.

(b) to (d) In view of the recently launched 'National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA)', the scheme of 'Enhancing Sustainability of Dryland Farming Systems' has been merged with the

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

scheme of Rainfed Area Development Programme which has been annqunced in the current year's budget.

Further, Government has launched two new programmes namely, 'National Food Security Mission (NFSM)' and 'Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)' on the recommendation of the National Development Council (NDC). Special emphasis has been given for dryland areas under the RKVY programme by making a provision of 25% allocation on the basis of net sown unirrigated areas in the States. Both these schemes are being implemented in the State of Rajasthan.

MSP of agricultural products

†1175. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minsiter of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the minimum support price of agricultural products is not very reasonable and transparent;

(b) whether it is also a fact that in the present system, actual market price of agricultural produce is not considered; and

(c) whether Government will determine the procurement prices of all agricultural products before seeding/sowing season of the crops so that their minimum support price could be declared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), while formulating its recommendations on price policy, considers a host of factors like cost of production in the States, changes in input prices, input/output price parity, trends in domestic and global market forces, effects on industrial cost structure, parity between prices paid and received by the farmers. The Government decides on the support price for various agricultural commodities taking into account the recommendations of the CACP, the views of Central Ministries, State Governments and other relevant important factors. The main objective of the MSP is to ensure the farmers a reasonable and remunerative price of their produce.

(c) The Government fixes Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for 25 major crops. It has no proposal to declare minimum support prices of all agricultural products.

Continuous cases of suicide by farmers in Vidarbha

1176. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has lately recurred any report about the causes of continuing suicides by farmers in Vidarbha;

(b) if so, the main reasons and circumstances leading to suicides as revealed by this inquiry report; and

(c) the steps, if any, taken by Government to prevent suicides by farmers under pressure of debt?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.